

NSC BRIEFING

30 July 1957

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN PAKISTAN

- I. Prime Minister Suhrawardy--who left New York Saturday enroute home via London and Amman--returns to Pakistan on 4 August to face two threats: stronger opposition to his pro-American foreign policy, and weakening of his political position in both East and West Pakistan.
- II. Pro-Communist political groups in both East and West Pakistan united on 25 July; formed new nation-wide party to oppose Suhrawardy's foreign policy, especially Pakistan's participation in Baghdad and SEATO pacts.
 - A. New organization--National Awami Party--heavily infiltrated with Communist Party workers and sympathizers. Organizing convention in Dacca strongly supported by propaganda--and probably funds--from Soviet, ChiCom, Indian sources.
 - B. United leftist front will make opposition to Pakistan's alliance with U.S. stronger and more effective. Though leaders have little in common besides opposition to present leadership, they will probably maintain unity during period leading up to elections--promised by Suhrawardy for next March.
 - C. New Communist-directed party--harping on U.S. "imperialism," demanding provincial autonomy, exploiting discontent over worsening economic conditions--likely to get considerable mass support. In election campaign, led by front's popular leaders, new party could seriously threaten anti-Communist parties.

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III. These developments are already undermining Suhrawardy's political base in East Pakistan.

- A. Defections from his ruling party, following formation of new leftist party, could cause East Pakistan government to fall. However, support from other anti-Communist parties in assembly probably will head off collapse.
- B. In addition, political maneuvering in West Pakistan, apparently directed by President Mirza, has strengthened rivals of Suhrawardy and blocked his attempts to build support there.

IV. Situation complicated by political and personal friction between Suhrawardy and Mirza, whose cooperation essential for continued stability.

- A. Little likelihood of open split in immediate future, though increasing political tension could force an eventual break. Result would be chaotic political situation, with serious consequences for U.S. policies.